

Medicare Rx Update: June 17, 2005

President Bush takes the stage... for Medicare Outreach and Education

President Bush, joined by Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt and CMS Administrator Dr. Mark McClellan, kicked off the "Medicare Covers America" campaign at the Hubert H. Humphrey Federal Building in Washington, D.C. yesterday. This event launched a new stage in our national effort to get comprehensive drug coverage to the more than 42 million people with Medicare who need help paying for their prescription drugs. A transcript of the President's remarks is available by clicking here <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/06/20050616-6.html> and a live web cast can be viewed at <http://videocast.nih.gov>

... and calls on Pharmacists for help

President Bush and Administrator McClellan traveled to a community center in Maple Grove, MN today to continue the discussion about the new Medicare benefit. To highlight the prominent role that community pharmacy will play in the new Medicare Drug benefit, two out of the four participants in the public discussion were pharmacists! Speaking directly to the pharmacy community, President Bush said:

... I want to remind those in...the retail business... that it's to your interest to educate people on the drug plan available, and that I think you have a duty. I encourage the folks at the pharmacies to get the information in hand to distribute to your customers. If you see somebody hurting, this will help them not hurt. This is a good deal... it's worthwhile.

The full text of the public discussion is available at:
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/06/20050617-4.html>

A message from CMS Administrator, Dr. Mark McClellan: "Get the word out... far and wide"

Medicare is partnering with many state and local organizations, patient advocacy groups and pharmacies to give people with Medicare good information and good advice about Medicare's new drug coverage before it takes effect on January 1, 2006. This new help is available to everyone with Medicare, no matter how they pay for their drugs today, and extra help is available for those with limited resources. Thanks for joining us in this grassroots education effort and please keep spreading the word to other organizations that share our commitment to helping millions of America's seniors and people with a disability with their prescription drug costs. For outreach resource materials and partner information, please visit our website "Partner Center" at: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/partnerships/>.

While detailed information from Plans will not be available until October 2005, educational information is available from Medicare now! For more information on who can get extra help with prescription drug costs and how to apply, call the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213, or visit <http://www.socialsecurity.gov> on the web. TTY users should call 1-800-325-0778.